

Flash Flood Fact Sheet

Except for heat related fatalities, more deaths occur from flooding than any other weather hazard. Why? Most people fail to realize the power of water. For example, six inches of fast-moving flood water can knock you off your feet.

While the number of fatalities can vary dramatically with weather conditions from year to year, the national 30-year average for flood deaths is 127. That compares with a 30-year average of 73 deaths for lightning, 65 for tornadoes and 16 for hurricanes. National Weather Service data also shows:



- More than half of all flash flood fatalities are vehicle-related,
- The majority of victims are males, and
- Flood deaths affect all age groups.

A **Flash Flood Watch** is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for thunderstorms to develop which could produce flash flooding. Normally these watches are issued anywhere from a few hours to about a day in advance. During a watch, people should have a heightened awareness that flooding may be possible in the near future.

A **Flash Flood Warning** is issued by the National Weather Service when flash flooding is imminent or already occurring. Warnings are issued up to 2 hours in advance of flooding and are usually based on radar data in conjunction with spotter or law enforcement reports. During a warning, people should take action immediately, if they are in the warned area.

Flash Flood Safety Rules

- Road beds may be washed out under flood waters. NEVER drive through flooded roadways. **Turn Around, Don't Drown.** If your vehicle is suddenly caught in rising water, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.
- Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams. **Turn Around, Don't Drown.**
- It only takes 6 inches of fast flowing water to knock you off your feet, and 24 inches of water to float most vehicles. **Turn Around, Don't Drown.**
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.
- If flooding occurs, get to higher ground. Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, canyons, washes, arroyos etc.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.
- Monitor the NOAA Weather Radio, or your favorite news source for vital weather related information.

*For the latest forecasts and warnings as well as safety rules go to the
Las Vegas National Weather Service web site at:*

<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/lasvegas>

